

GENERAL OVERVIEW

SONOMA COUNTY WATER AGENCY

Mission

The Sonoma County Water Agency (Agency) was created in 1949 by an act of the California State Legislature and is a special district. The law that created the Agency gives it the authority to produce and furnish surface water and groundwater for beneficial uses; to control floodwaters; to generate electricity; and to provide recreational facilities in connection with the Agency's facilities. Legislation enacted in 1994 added the treatment and disposal of wastewater to the Agency's responsibilities. Increasing environmental regulations, including the listing of three Russian River salmonid species as threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act, have influenced the Agency's water supply, flood control and wastewater management activities. Consequently, the Agency actively participates in and funds projects involving natural resource (e.g., fisheries, wetlands, etc.) protection, recovery and enhancement.

Special Revenue Funds – Flood Control Zones

The Special Revenue Funds described below are used to construct and improve flood control facilities and to provide program support services for the flood control zones in Sonoma County. Common types of features constructed to help alleviate flooding are channelization works, bypass conduit systems, and diversion systems. In addition, natural systems are maintained to provide flood control capacity.

Sonoma County is divided into nine major watershed areas. Flood control zones were created encompassing eight of these watersheds. Zone 1A (Laguna-Mark West), Zone 2A (Petaluma River), and Zone 3A (Valley of the Moon/Upper Sonoma Creek) have the most active flood control programs. Zone 4A (Upper Russian River) and Zone 6A (Dry Creek) are completely inactive. Zone 5A (Lower Russian River) and Zone 8A (South Coastal) are less active than Zones 1A, 2A, and 3A, with only ongoing maintenance of existing facilities being performed. Zone 7A (North Coastal) has minimal fund reserves earning interest. The ninth watershed area, covering the lower portions of Sonoma Creek and the Petaluma River, was never established as a zone.

Flood control zones were created to reduce the frequency of flooding within the zone through construction of adequate facilities to safely handle projected storm flows. An appointed advisory committee for each active zone meets several times each year to make recommendations to the Agency's Board of Directors regarding priorities for construction of drainage facilities within each zone. Each proposed project is evaluated using criteria covering historical flooding problems, areas benefited, alternative funding available, special safety and health factors, coordination with other public projects, and environmental concerns.

Flood Control Zone 1A is the watershed area that drains into and includes the Laguna de Santa Rosa and Mark West Creek.

Flood Control Zone 2A is the watershed area in Sonoma County that drains into and includes the Petaluma River, with the exception of the most southerly portion of the area, which consists primarily of reclaimed tidelands.

Flood Control Zone 3A is the watershed area in Sonoma County that drains into and includes Sonoma Creek, generally north of Highway 121.

The primary funding source for capital projects in Zone 1A and 2A is a voter-approved ten-year benefit assessment program for flood control, which ends June 30, 2007. In addition, some funding is received from the ad valorem property taxes. Funds for Zone 3A are received only from the ad valorem property taxes. Some additional funds are sometimes available from cities, the County, and community development sources to construct flood control projects.

In this 5-year plan, there are 16 projects identified for funding in Zone 1A, six projects identified for funding in Zone 2A, and three projects identified for funding in Zone 3A. The Agency will not take the lead on all of these projects, but will provide administration services and funding for all of the projects through the flood control zones. Funding provided by partner entities are not included in the project costs presented in this plan.

Water Supply

Russian River Projects Fund

The Russian River Projects Fund is used (1) to pay the costs for water supply and erosion control activities along the Russian River arising from assurances given by the Agency for the construction of the Coyote Valley Dam Project and Warm Springs Dam Project; (2) to pay the costs incurred by the Agency in securing and defending the Agency's appropriate water rights necessary for the realization of the full benefit of those projects; (3) to pay the costs incurred by the Agency in operating the Coyote Valley Dam and Warm Springs Dam Projects, (4) to pay the costs for water supply issues arising from activities of the Potter Valley Project; and (5) fishery enhancement programs to ensure compliance with environmental regulations.

In this 5-year plan, the Russian River Projects Fund provides for continued studies of various proceedings for the Potter Valley Project and design of the Matanzas Creek Fish Ladder.

General District Funds

These funds include the General Fund and the Spring Lake Park Fund.

The Spring Lake Park Fund provides for occasional construction projects in Spring Lake Park. Spring Lake Park is a public park owned by the Agency and operated under contract by the Sonoma County Regional Parks Department.

In this 5-year capital plan, there are no identified capital projects.

Internal Service Fund

The Internal Service Fund provides for: (1) building improvements to the Administration building, Service Center, and Operations and Maintenance building at the Agency's West College Avenue site; (2) building improvements to the maintenance facilities located at the Airport Treatment Plant; and (3) funding of a new building site and other land purchases.

The Agency's operations and maintenance (O&M) center is located at 2150 West College Ave in Santa Rosa. The O&M Center was constructed in the mid 1980's and was intended to accommodate both the staff and equipment necessary to provide flood control and water supply services.

In 1995 the Agency assumed responsibility for eleven sanitation systems from the former County of Sonoma Public Works Department. In addition, because the listing of the coho and chinook salmon and steelhead trout under the Endangered Species Act, the Agency added staff to manage a Section 7 consultation process between the Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and NOAA Fisheries. The Agency has also added staff to develop a fisheries enchantment program to study and improve the Russian River watershed fisheries and a water education and conservation program to reduce potable water demands.

As a result of the increase in responsibilities and staff, the Board of Supervisors, in early 2003, directed Agency staff to solicit proposals for property in which to locate the Agency's administrative and O&M facilities.

In FY 03/04 the Agency purchased an existing building and property. The maintenance building will be located on the newly purchased property while the rest of the Agency staff will be located in the existing building. The two properties are located across the street from each other. The existing building is currently being redesigned and is expected to be occupied in late 2004 while the maintenance building will be constructed in 2004/05. It is expected that the maintenance building will be occupied in late 2005.

In this 5-year plan, there are two new capital projects identified for the Internal Service Fund.

Enterprise Funds

Water Transmission System

The Agency is the primary provider of potable water to eight water contractors. The water contractors include the cities of Santa Rosa, Petaluma, Sonoma, Rohnert Park, and Cotati, and the Valley of the Moon, Forestville and North Marin Water Districts. The Agency is responsible for the planning, environmental review, design, and construction of capital improvement projects to expand the water transmission system that serves the water contractors as required under the terms and conditions specified in the “Eleventh Amended Agreement for Water Supply” (Eleventh Amended Agreement). Construction of the facilities specified in the Eleventh Amended Agreement is projected to occur over the next thirty years.

The water contractors’ advisory committee (Water Advisory Committee) meets approximately monthly with the Agency to discuss the scheduling and financing of water transmission system projects and other water transmission system issues. Capital improvements made to the water transmission system are funded from the Storage Facilities Fund, the Pipeline Facilities Fund, and the Common Facilities Fund to meet the needs of the water contractors for the facilities identified under the Eleventh Amended Agreement. Capital projects have been scheduled to accommodate funding limitations, to provide the least disruption to existing facilities and water contractors, and to allow an orderly and timely start-up to meet the conditions of the Eleventh Amended Agreement or any new laws or regulations governing drinking water suppliers. Construction of Collector No. 6 began in the late spring of 2001. The Agency anticipates Collector 6 will be completed by the summer of 2004. Pending completion of Collector 6, the Agency’s water transmission system has been determined to be temporarily impaired for providing reliable peak production capacity. In February 2001 the Agency entered into a “Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Water Transmission System Capacity Allocation During Temporary Impairment” with its water contractors, the Town of Windsor, and the Marin Municipal Water District to address issues associated with the temporary impairment, including the allocation of the reliable water production capacity.

This 5-year plan includes funding for 19 projects related to storage, pipeline, and common facilities for the water transmission system. The total projected cost for these projects is approximately \$69.5 million. Included in these projects is the Water Supply and Transmission System Project and individual, specific projects identified in the Water Supply and Transmission System Project. The Agency is identifying potential water supply sources and facilities to meet the expected future water demands identified for each water contractor as part of the Water Supply and Transmission System Project.

Sanitation Zones

The Agency owns and operates five sanitation zones, which include Airport- Larkfield-Wikiup, Geyserville, Graton, Penngrove and Sea Ranch. The sanitation zones operate as zones of benefit, similar to the Agency’s flood control zones.

Sanitation projects are scheduled according to the specific plans for each zone. Funding of projects may be accomplished by Federal and/or State grants, state revolving fund loans, certificates of participation, notes, revenue bonds, or on a pay-as-you-go basis.

This 5-year plan includes funding for projects to replace, upgrade, or expand the collection, treatment, and disposal/reclamation facilities for most of the sanitation zones.

Sanitation Districts

The Agency is also responsible for the overall management (including operation) of five County Sanitation Districts. The five districts include Forestville, Occidental, Russian River, Sonoma Valley, and South Park. Each County Sanitation District exists as a separate legal entity as a special district.

This 5-year plan includes funding for projects to replace, upgrade, or expand the collection, treatment, and disposal/reclamation facilities for most of the County Sanitation Districts.

SONOMA COUNTY WATER AGENCY - CAPITAL PROJECTS PLAN
TOTAL PROJECT FUNDING SUMMARY
FY 2004/05 THROUGH FY 2008/09

FUNDING SOURCE / NAME	5 YEAR TOTAL FUNDING	PROJECTED FUNDS				
		2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
FEDERAL / STATE						
Federal	0	0	0	0	0	0
State	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Federal / State Funds	0	0	0	0	0	0
COUNTY GENERAL FUND						
County General Fund	0	0	0	0	0	
Total County General Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
NON-COUNTY FUNDS						
Laguna-Mark West Zone 1A	29,285,372	9,812,272	6,114,247	5,044,136	4,111,208	4,203,509
Petaluma River Zone 2A	9,730,500	1,275,700	5,263,700	1,063,700	1,063,700	1,063,700
Valley of the Moon Zone 3A	1,812,564	932,000	212,000	217,250	222,763	228,551
Water Supply Fund	5,115,000	55,000	120,000	340,000	4,550,000	50,000
General District Fund	565,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	113,000
Internal Service Fund	175,000	175,000	0	0	0	0
Storage Facilities Fund	16,010,000	4,022,500	4,684,000	7,243,500	60,000	0
Pipeline Facilities Fund	38,430,000	150,000	950,000	21,000,000	16,330,000	0
Common Facilities Fund	5,895,000	3,090,000	905,000	700,000	600,000	600,000
Maint - Bldg Improvements Funds	9,251,000	4,980,600	2,169,100	858,100	612,600	630,600
Sanitation	50,581,750	12,871,000	14,567,750	8,933,000	10,505,000	3,705,000
Total Non-County Funds	166,851,186	37,477,072	35,098,797	45,512,686	38,168,271	10,594,360
UNDETERMINED FUNDS						
Undetermined Funds	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Undetermined Funds	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	166,851,186	37,477,072	35,098,797	45,512,686	38,168,271	10,594,360